

GENERATION NEXT

Agriculture's future depends on its ability to attract young people to a wealth of careers

Keep 'em down on the farm

Keeping young people down on the farm isn't all agriculture must do to ensure a vibrant future. It must make young people aware of the diversity of career options – from farms to fields to feed mills to finances. From the laboratories that research new foodstuffs to those that search out cures for animal diseases.

This month's The Manager from Cornell's PRO-DAIRY program explores a sampling of careers open to young people interested in the dairy industry. It does so from the vantage point of several young people who have chosen to work in varied fields. They have their reasons. Often they've chosen to work as a nutritionist, veterinarian, herd manager or partner on a home dairy because they have a "passion" for dairying. We can hope they never lose that.

Young people's reasons for choosing a career in the dairy field may differ, but similar experiences serve them well in their careers. These common

threads run through their experiences:

■ Dive into learning experiences with zeal. The young people profiled on the next several pages take advantage of all sorts of learning opportunities from 4-H to programs for future dairy leaders (page 22) and dairy discussion groups. Those who attended college signed up eagerly for internships, study trips and programs such as Dairy Fellows.

■ Find a mentor to encourage you to pursue your dreams and to provide an example of how to build a career in a given field.

■ Make professional connections. Who you know can open doors for you.

■ Develop people skills and hold sound values. Skills can be taught. Employers will "hire values."

■ Work hard, prove yourself and opportunities will present themselves, as Cargill's Mallory Perkins advises. (page 28)

In addition to learning about careers in The Manager, check out the Pennsylvania Center for Dairy Excellence website. It profiles 33 dairy careers. See: www.centerfordairyexcellence.org. Click on the Educator tab and then on Resources for Students.

Generation Next is the topic of a Dairy Profit Seminar, sponsored by PRO-DAIRY at Empire Farm Days. Young people on the panel will talk about their career paths – what went well and what they would do differently. Generation Next: How and why young people enter the dairy industry is slated for Aug. 10, 2011, beginning at 10:30 a.m.

Also on Wednesday, PRO-DAIRY hosts the Junior DAIRY LEADER graduation ceremony, beginning after lunch. Listening to these young people talk about their year-long experience will instill confidence that dairy is in good hands.

Finally, we at PRO-DAIRY encourage you to share this issue of The Manager with your school's guidance office and administration. It will show them there's a good life to have down on the farm. □

INSIDE

Keep 'em down on the farm
page 19

Hire values; teach skills
page 20

Programs build future dairy leaders
page 22

Career roundtable
page 24

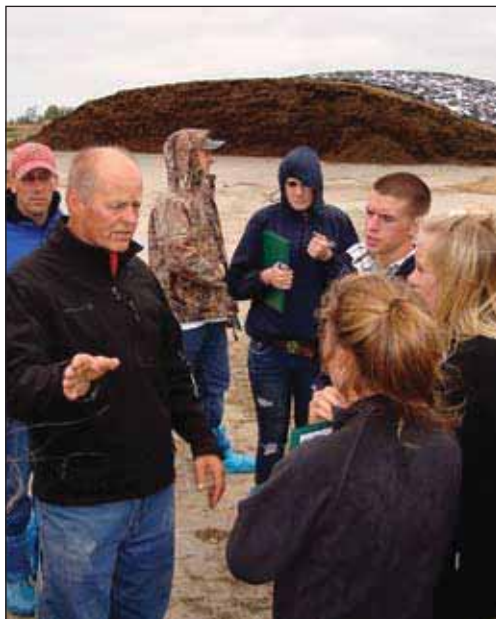
You get back what you give
page 26

Careers close to dairy
page 28

They found their management niche
page 30

Telling dairy's story in the Facebook age
page 32

Junior DAIRY LEADER students meet with a Wisconsin dairy farmer during the first session of the year-long program that introduces young people to dairy career opportunities.



The Manager, a special section prepared by PRO-DAIRY specialists, is sponsored by Pfizer Animal Health and appears in Eastern DairyBusiness four times a year. In keeping with the PRO-DAIRY mission, The Manager helps strengthen the management skills of dairy producers and increase the profitability of the dairy industry. PRO-DAIRY, an educational program begun in 1988, is a joint venture of the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, Cornell University's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, and Northeast agriservice organizations. For reprints of PRO-DAIRY's The Manager, contact Heather Howland, 272 Morrison Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853. Phone: 607. 255.4478 Email: hh96@cornell.edu